

Light:



A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATSOEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT!'—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY

In a remarkable article in 'Popular Astronomy,' an American magazine, Mary E. Byrd expresses the opinion that the prevailing indifference to the stars is 'deplorable almost beyond the power of expression.' It is quite true, and we wish that the popular attitude towards the splendours of the night skies was the only example of the kind. But, as we sadly realise, it is only one instance of the blindness of the general eye to the things of beauty and wonder about us. Miss Byrd makes an effective point in her remark that astronomy and a telescope are not inseparable. The telescope is really a limiting instrument. It gives a magnified view of only a relatively minute portion of the heavens whereas the eyes take in at once a vast area of the celestial beauty, without isolating any part from the unity of the whole. As she well says:—

The most wonderful view of the most powerful telescope pales into insignificance when we look up and see, with no intervening glass, the glory of the whole heavens.

And it may be added, perhaps, that when humanity begins to be interested in some of the wonders of the world within its own vision there will be less hostility to the idea of more glorious worlds beyond the range of the physical perception. It will have done something to bridge the gap between the narrow interests of the personal life and the great realms of existence that encircle the Universe disclosed by the five senses.

'Meditations, a Theosophical Book of Devotion including Directions for Meditations,' by Hermann Rudolph (The Theosophical Publishing Society, 3s. net), is a small volume designed, as the author tells us, to give an answer to the question, 'What must I do to arrive at the Self-Knowledge of Truth (Theosophy)?' It consists for the most part of invocations to Parabrahm and to Atma, devotional but rather too declamatory in style quite to justify the title, 'Meditations.' It is a kind of Theosophical breviary, and in some remarks at the end of the book we note a warning against the practice of occult exercises in ignorance and unprepared. Such a practice may lead to 'mediumship (!) or black magic.' The dry formalism of the ideas of life and conduct set forth are characteristic of the order of thought to which the book belongs. It will doubtless appeal to the type of mind for which it is designed.

'The Quest' for the current quarter fully maintains its high standard. It opens with a poem by Mr. W. B. Yeats,

'The Mountain Tomb,' and amongst the more noteworthy articles are 'The Essence of Sufism' by Dr. R. A. Nicholson; 'The Philosophy of the "As If"' by the Editor, Mr. G. R. S. Mead; 'Rudolf Eucken and the Mystics' by Dr. Meyrick Booth, and 'The Mystical Philosophy of Ancient China' by Mr. L. Cranmer Byng. There is also a story by Mr. Algernon Blackwood in which an occult theme is handled with the skill and insight characteristic of his work. In his able discussion of the affinities of Eucken's philosophy with mystical doctrines Mr. Booth strikes an increasingly familiar note when he says:—

It must be clear to all who follow the main tendencies of modern thought that there is to-day a broad stream of mysticism such as has not been seen for centuries. Men have revolted alike against the intolerable emptiness of scientific materialism and the fantastic conceptual structures of intellectualistic speculation. There is in progress a return towards the sources of spiritual life, a tendency to study inner experience.

'Carnacki the Ghost-Finder,' by William Hope Hodgson, (Eveleigh Nash, 6s.) is a book of ingeniously constructed episodes of occult interest. Carnacki is a ghost-hunter equipped with a knowledge of magical arts and their use in dealing with the grisly monsters that (for a certain type of minds) populate the invisible world. Mr. Hodgson is a skilful narrator and disguises his plots admirably. The explanations of the phenomena described are not always of a supernatural character, and when the secret is revealed—as in the story of 'The Horse of the Invisible'—the reader is left in a state of astonishment. It seemed that there could be none but an occult explanation of the marvels described. The causes, however, are of a mixed nature, and even in this particular case the author is reluctant to part with his ghostly atmosphere and something in the background is left unexplained. Carnacki is very much up-to-date in his theurgical appliances; for example, he employs an 'electrical pentacle.' This should be a painful idea to occultists who follow the old ritual. Witches riding on broomsticks are quite 'in the picture,' but when they take to using aeroplanes their glory will depart. 'I turned now to my camera,' 'I snapped off the flashlight'—really now, these methods are much too modern. However, it is a book full of thrills, so we may forgive the recourse to the latest instruments of science.

An interesting discussion has been in progress between Ellen Key, the distinguished Swedish writer and Mrs. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the American feminist philosopher, the subject being the place of woman in the life of the community. Ellen Key maintains that the entire activity of women in industrial life and the professions is not a normal and healthy one. It is the outcome of the need to earn a living or a mere means of a self-expression adopted because the more natural planes of activity are closed by economic conditions. A woman's true vocation, she holds, is wifehood and motherhood. Mrs. Gilman, on the contrary, maintains that woman is rightly engaged in enlarging her sphere of action; the world needs

her influence outside the home. Children, she contends, need not only the mother's love but the care and service of others who are naturally endowed with qualities that enable them to train the child mind. In short, there are women with the talent of motherhood although themselves childless, just as there are women who are mothers but who lack the full maternal instincts. We think Mrs. Gilman is right. The question needs to be handled in a large spirit. The maternal instinct is capable of great expansion, just as is the fraternal and the filial. There are wider impulses to service than those of blood kinship.

Like his former book, 'Superstition and Common Sense,' which was published anonymously, Mr. B. H. Piercy's 'Facts and Fancies or Hallucinations' (paper cover, 1s. net, L. N. Fowler & Co., 7, Imperial Arcade, Ludgate Hill, E.C.) is characterised by a rather smart and here and there flippant style, his excuse for the flippancy being that 'there are some matters so poignant that if one is forbidden to laugh, tears may take the place of laughter.' Mr. Piercy is about equally dissatisfied with the explanations of things given on the one hand by materialistic science and, on the other, by orthodox religion with its claim to a special revelation. History, he declares, 'gives us no warrant for any such thing as a special revelation having ever occurred.' It would be 'quite out of keeping with the system the Deity apparently adopts, namely evolution.' The spiritual world 'finds it better policy to train their offspring blindfold, for they thus get greater efforts from them.' But though 'scientifically, as the term is, we cannot prove that man maintains his individuality after death,' we seem, in Mr. Piercy's view, to have 'very good grounds for believing that in a sense, and at any rate for a time, he does.'

We agree that the 'policy of the spiritual world,' or the wisest side of it, would be to check rather than excite such an undue interest in that world as would unfit us for the part we must play in this, and that this fact may furnish the key to some perplexing experiences. Mr. Piercy narrates a striking case in point which came under his direct cognizance. A bereaved husband sought to be satisfied of the continued existence of his wife. He obtained through several clairvoyants, and then through his own automatic writing, the assurance of this fact and of her unchanged affection, but when he endeavoured to press his inquiries further he was told to be satisfied. On persisting he got nonsensical answers and was even made the victim of deceptive and teasing tricks, his murmurs being met by the communicating entities with a charge of ingratitude. Had they not helped his wife to show him that she was all right and happy? To be too sure of a spiritual existence tended, they said, to make a man neglect his earthly duties. 'He must not ask them to tell him things or help him directly, for that would be undoing the good that earthly life was doing him. He must go back into the world and struggle on, but when at length he had played the game to the end, he would find many friends waiting for him on the other side. Meanwhile a sign would be given him from time to time that all had not been a fevered dream and that those in the spirit world had not altogether forgotten him.' Mr. Piercy adds that this promise was kept.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

'The Psychic Element in Folk-Lore' was the title of an exceedingly interesting address given on Thursday evening, April 10th, by Mr. Angus McArthur, at the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance. A report will shortly appear in 'Light.'

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE.

WELCOME RECEPTION TO DR. J. M. PEEBLES.

On Wednesday next, the 23rd inst., at 3 p.m., a SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. Tea will be provided during the afternoon, and at 4 o'clock Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, will welcome Dr. J. M. Peebles and his companion, Mr. R. P. Sudall, on their visit to London. Admission: Members and Associates free; Visitors, 2s. each. No tickets required.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING NEXT, APRIL 24TH,

WHEN AN ADDRESS WILL BE GIVEN BY

'CHEIRO'

ON

'HANDS OF FAMOUS PEOPLE.' With Lantern Illustrations.

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Address will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Hon. Secretary, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

The last meeting of the season will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East, S.W. (near the National Gallery), on Thursday evening, May 8th, when Miss Felicia Scatterd will give an address on 'Psychophasms and Skotographs': psychic pictures produced in darkness.

MEETINGS AT 110, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On Tuesday next, April 22nd, Mrs. Mary Davies will give clairvoyant descriptions of spirit people at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee, 1s. each to Associates; Members free; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each. 29th, Mrs. Cannock.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On Thursday next, April 24th, at 5 p.m. prompt, Mrs. Beaurepaire, trance address and clairvoyant descriptions.

FRIENDLY INTERCOURSE.—Members and Associates are invited to attend the rooms at 110, St. Martin's-lane, on Friday afternoons, from 3 to 4, and to introduce friends interested in Spiritualism, for informal conversation, the exchange of experiences, and mutual helpfulness.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On Friday next, April 25th, at 4 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to life here and on 'the other side,' mediumship, and the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism generally. Admission 1s.; Members and Associates free. MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to this meeting without payment. Visitors should be prepared with written inquiries of general interest to submit to the control. Students and inquirers alike will find these meetings especially useful in helping them to solve perplexing problems and to realise the actuality of spirit personality.

SPIRIT HEALING.—Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Mr. Percy R. Street, the healing medium, will attend between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., for diagnosis by a spirit control, magnetic healing, and delineations from the personal aura.

MRS. MARY SEATON'S LECTURES.

A series of Special Wednesday Afternoon Lectures will be delivered by Mrs. Mary Seaton, at 110, St. Martin's-lane, at 3 o'clock. The following is the syllabus:—

Wednesday, April 30th, on 'Marriage: or Ideal Mating.'

Wednesday, May 7th, on 'The Right and Wrong Uses of Psychic Powers.'

Wednesday, May 21st, on 'The Control of the Body; or, Mental and Spiritual Healing.'

Wednesday, May 28th, on 'The Real and the Unreal; or, The Unfolding Consciousness.'

ADMISSION 1s.

The Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Mrs. Mary Seaton jointly invite Members of the Alliance to attend these meetings free of charge.

THE VOICE PHENOMENA.

CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF SPIRIT RETURN.

BY JAMES COATES.

(Continued from page 173.)

TESTIMONY OF MR. JAMES COATES—(Continued).

A voice, out of the darkness and close to me, said: 'How are you, James?' 'Well, friend, who are you?' I asked. 'I am Jessie's mother.' 'I am glad you have been able to come.' 'So am I, mother,' said Mrs. Coates.

Much to Mrs. Coates' astonishment, the voice, instead of replying, hummed over a stanza of 'Gentle Annie':—

'Shall we never more behold thee,
Never hear thy winning voice again?'

Mrs. Coates: 'How strange, mother! You never sang except when nursing the little ones.' To this the answer came: 'But you did, Jessie. Don't you remember you used to sing that long ago?' 'Yes, mother, I used to sing it, because I liked the sentiment. Are you glad, mother dear, you are able to come to us in this way?' 'Yes, Jessie, I am.' 'You did not believe it possible when on earth?' 'No, I did not.' 'Does it make you happy to know you can come back?' 'Yes. I will come again,' leaving abruptly.

Mrs. Coates, who was anticipating further conversation, confessed to being disappointed, but as other voices appeared anxious to communicate, we had to be content. Except that the voice resembled that of Mrs. Coates' mother (the late Mrs. David Anderson), and the statement as to the song was correct, there was little given to establish identity. Mrs. Anderson has communicated by other modes, and we may reasonably conjecture that she made use of this method to make her presence known.

At this sitting I was tapped on the head, not by the trumpet, but by a man's hand, to arrest my attention. The touch was kindly, although not caressing. A voice came close to me and addressed me. In tone and expression it was not unlike the quiet and firm voice of my father, who passed into the unseen about twenty-five years ago. Mrs. Coates, the only one present beside myself who had met my father in life, also recognised the voice. It said: 'James.' Although I knew, I was so taken aback, I asked, 'What James?' 'I am your father,' was the quiet reply. 'I am delighted you have been able to come.' 'So am I, my boy. I am glad to see Jessie and you so happy together.'

A very simple and natural statement. Although I am in my seventieth year, it was characteristic of my father that he should call me 'my boy,' as that is an Irish term of endearment, and its use had more in it than appeared on the surface.

'Yes, father, it might have been otherwise. You know I had many unhappy days.'

The voice: 'Jessie has taken you from hell to heaven, James.' 'That is true, father. She has done a great deal to help me personally, and co-operates in my investigations.' 'Jessie has helped you, and has been a great moral support to you.'

Mrs. Coates: 'You call me Jessie?' 'Yes, I do, dear. Why not? You are a loving daughter, and very good to my boy, Jessie. How is Jim?' 'He is quite well.' 'That is well. Give him my love.' This was promised.

It is very curious that while the intelligence in many cases gave evidence of being fully aware of what was taking place in our various doings, the conversation should take the homely and simple character of two old friends meeting after a long separation. My father—who had never seen my son—used the homely phrase employed in correspondence, 'How is Jim?'

After a short conversation of a private character, I remarked: 'I am nearly as old as you were, father, before you left us.' 'Not quite, James,' was the prompt and correct reply, 'but you will live longer than I did.' 'I do not think so, father.' 'Yes, James, you will live longer than I did. You will live till eighty, and before then will do good work.'

I suppose this was a well-meant suggestion, both for work and for life. It will be interesting to see how this works out.

I then said: 'We are glad to have been able to give you this opportunity. Do you believe in this now?' i.e., in spirit-return. 'Yes, James, I do. I used to think you were going to the devil.' 'I know you thought so. But you were always kind and considerate. I am glad you now know this to be true. Did you know that Aunt Ellen came?' 'Yes, James. Ellen is with me,' and he added, to my astonishment, 'Hambledon is here.'

Had my father said that Isabella, or Charles, or Richard, or Eleanor was present, I could have understood, but 'Hambledon!' I said 'I have heard of him.'

Mrs. Coates, alluding to some statements made by a relative, said, 'You mean your relative Lord Hamilton?' 'Hambledon.' That is the Irish way.'

To me the voice said: 'The gentleman wants to speak to you. Good-bye, Jessie; good-bye, James. God bless you both.'

While I was thinking over this puzzle 'Dr. Sharp' cried out, 'Hambledon and Hamilton are the same,' adding 'Lady Coates is here.' This again was curious. I replied, 'I never heard of her.' 'Dr. Sharp' insisted: 'Lady Hambledon is here. She was known and talked of in the family as "Lady Coates."'

As there were other voices speaking to sitters I did not press the matter further and neither Hambledon nor 'Lady Coates' addressed us. My attitude, I admit, was not favourable.

Whether the name was in the atmosphere or not, certainly once or twice at this very séance 'Dr. Sharp' called my wife 'Lady Coates.' I have tried to get at what the intelligences desired to convey. One thing is certain, the mention of this out-of-the-way name was remarkable. The medium could not know of such a person, much less that the Hambledons and the Hamiltons were connected. I did not know at the time, neither did Mrs. Coates, nor did I think of the name till it was mentioned.

I wrote subsequently to an elder brother, and also to a sole surviving aunt—an old lady over ninety. The latter tells me that a sister of her great-grandmother was married to Mr. Hambledon, a linen merchant in Derry. Thus by marriage there was a Hambledon in the family. My brother told me of a conversation my father had with the father of the late Duke of Abercorn, when the latter, seeing the fob-signet seal worn by my father, explained the connection between the Irish Hambledons and the Scotch Hamiltons, and as regards the signet which my father wore, and which I had often seen, I learned for the first time that the 'J. C.' (under the crest), which I always thought stood for James Coates, was in reality 'H.' for Hambledon, to whom that seal in the first instance belonged. It had been handed down, and was worn by my grandfather and father, and is now in the possession of my sister in London. I find from my inquiries that the portrait of Barbara Kirkland (Lady Hambledon—so-called) is at present in my brother's, A.T. Coates', home in Liverpool. Hambledon—I have been informed—was knighted subsequently to his wife's death, and she had been spoken of as 'Lady Hamilton' in the family.

Mrs. Wriedt: 'There is a gentleman present. He has a limp in his walk, and looks like a minister. I think he is for Mr. Coates.'

A voice, which appeared to come from the centre of the room, said: 'I am the Rev. David Macrae.' I said, 'We met, friend, on several occasions long ago, but I am surprised at this visit. You were so opposed to anything like this!'

The voice, which was very like that of Mr. Macrae, said: 'I was not a Spiritualist, and believed you were wrong and held that Spiritualism was doing a great amount of harm.' 'That is correct,' I replied. The voice went on to say: 'I opposed it, and rightly so, to be honest to my sincere convictions. I gave some attention to the subject, conversed with several Spiritualists and attended a few lectures. I was not convinced. I had learned nothing to move me from the position which I held to be true regarding the impenitent and the state of the saved.'

'You held that the Scriptures taught the destruction of the wicked, and conferred immortality, as the gift of God, on the righteous only,' I said. 'Yes, but I know now that Spiritualism is true. I thought I was liberal in religious thought, but was wrong in my assumptions.'

'You know that spirit communion is a fact?' 'It is a fact and demands most thoughtful study,' was the reply.

Mrs. Coates: 'Do you remember me?' 'Yes.' 'Do you remember when I refused to let you mesmerise my sister?' 'Yes.'

You were quite right. It was your mother's wish.' This was correct, and referred to an incident in Mrs. Coates' school days. 'Have you controlled Mrs. Coates at any time?' I asked. 'Several times,' was the reply.

There were other statements made, indicating that rectitude and sympathy were more important in life than doctrinal domination.

Mrs. Coates: 'Have you met your old friend the Rev. Fergus Ferguson, D.D.?' There was no reply. Possibly the power was exhausted in giving by 'direct voice' the foregoing fairly connected statement given as to his views, and their modifications as far as the possibility of spirit communion is concerned.

The Rev. David Macrae was in his time a noted divine in Scotland, possessing liberal and progressive ideas. In a heresy hunt he was banished from the United Presbyterian Church for throwing over the dogma of 'Everlasting Damnation,' still so dear to the *unco guid*. He certainly did not believe in Spiritualism. 'Speerin' th' speerits' was but an unholy revival of an ancient abomination. He knew many Spiritualists, granted their intelligence and sincerity, but thought that at best they were hallucinated, and at worst were victims of fraud. His visit was as unexpected as it was convincing. Mrs. Wriedt could have known neither his views nor that Mrs. Coates or myself had ever anything to do with this intrepid and courageous minister of Christ, for whom his brethren 'groaned in spirit' as being 'unsound' in fundamentals.

(To be continued.)

THE GENEVA CONGRESS.

Mr. Hanson G. Hey, secretary of the National Union of Spiritualists, informs us that he has been in correspondence with the Polytechnic Touring Association, 309, Regent-street, with reference to arrangements for British Spiritualists to go to Geneva to attend the Universal Congress which is to be held in that city at Whitsuntide. A Polytechnic party will leave London at 9 p.m. on Friday night, May 9th, travelling *via* Dover-Calais route, of which Spiritualists can avail themselves. Basle will be reached about noon on Saturday, and Geneva at 7.30 p.m. Accommodation will be had at the Metropole for six days, including meat breakfast, evening dinner, bed, lights and attendance. Visitors get lunch where they happen to be. Return on the Friday following, reaching London early on the Saturday morning. Arrangements have been made for those who are unable to leave London on the Friday evening to follow on the Saturday at 2.20 p.m. Those who wish to leave Geneva a day earlier and have a day and night in Paris can arrange to do so. Fares from London to London: Third class England, second class Continent, and six days hotel, as above, £7 7s. inclusive. Country friends can get a ticket from home to London, available for forty-five days, at a fare and a third when booking for the tour. Will those who intend going kindly send early intimation to Mr. Hey at 30, Glen Terrace, Clover Hill, Halifax, as he is trying to secure reserved compartments, and mention the Spiritualist National Union when booking tickets from the Polytechnic.

The Congress will be opened on Saturday, May 10th, at 3 p.m., and a conference will be held at 8 o'clock. On Sunday, the 11th, meetings will be held at 9.30 a.m., 2 p.m., and at 8 o'clock a banquet will be offered to the official delegates by the Society of Psychic Studies of Geneva. Meetings will be held on Monday at 9.30 a.m., and at 2 and 8 p.m. On Tuesday, at 9.30 a.m., the final questions will be dealt with and the Congress closed, and at 2.30 p.m. an excursion will be made to the Salève, at the invitation of the Geneva society. Members of the Congress can help in the net cost of the banquet and the excursion.

The subjects for discussion are: Saturday (a), 'The Place of Spiritualism in the Religious Evolution of Humanity.' Sunday (b), 'The Practice of Mediumship.' Monday (c), 'The Spiritualist Press.' On Tuesday there will be a general discussion, and those who so desire can visit the studio of the celebrated painting medium, Hélène Smith.

It is hoped that there will be a good British representation. The London Spiritualist Alliance will be represented by Mr. E. W. Wallis, Hon. Sec., and Editor of 'LIGHT,' and the National Union of Spiritualists by Mr. Hanson G. Hey.

REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES OF THE REV. C. L. TWEEDALE.

From time to time during the past few years we have printed in 'LIGHT' interesting particulars of remarkable happenings at a vicarage in the North of England, but we did not mention the name of our contributor for obvious reasons. Now, however, that the fact that the Rev. Charles L. Tweedale, the Vicar of Weston, is a Spiritualist has been made public, we shall not be divulging any secret when we mention that the communications referred to were sent us by Mr. Tweedale. In a statement to the Press, which appeared in 'The Wharfedale and Airedale Observer' on the 4th inst., Mr. Tweedale defends himself from the statements which have been made regarding him, and in it he says:—

I have never heard but one person object to my allusion to spiritual verities, and this person was notoriously opposed to the whole subject. On the other hand, I have known many come to my church for instruction and information concerning these things. During the last few days I have received shoals of letters of encouragement and sympathy from all quarters. Last Sunday I preached to representatives of the Press, who afterwards informed me that in their opinion I had, in my sermon, absolutely justified myself regarding the matter of spiritual teaching, and if anyone took objection to preaching of that kind, it must be due to ignorance.

The description of our occasional psychical research investigations given by the people's warden to the interviewer is a ridiculous travesty. So far from being 'slightly interested,' he took the keenest interest in the subject, in addition to sitting at my table, as guest, for months. He was not the first to request the date of the coin, as he states. Some of the phenomena took place in a good light from a lamp, and under test conditions, with everyone keenly on the alert. The attempt is made to suggest fraud, and that the thing was not genuine, but, unfortunately for this case of 'suggestio falsi,' very many extraordinary manifestations have taken place in broad daylight, and full lamp-light, in the presence of several witnesses, and of such a nature as to exclude all possibility of either fraud or delusion. The falling of the coins may seem incredible to those who have no knowledge of the subject, but this incident is a trifle compared to what we have all seen and heard scores of times. I myself have seen, in my own house, and in the presence of two other persons, heavy articles shoot out from remote and distant corners of a brilliantly lighted room, high up, close to the ceiling, with no one standing within four yards of the place, and I have seen the articles dash across the long room as though shot from a catapult, and then drop with a resounding crash upon the floor. In broad daylight metal articles have come floating down in the air, with the tremulous motion of a leaf falling on a summer breeze, in the presence of more than one observer.

In broad daylight several observers have repeatedly placed a light papier-mâché tray upon the mantelpiece, and then retired to a distance and watched it rise in the air and dash across the room, no one approaching it. In a good light several observers standing upon the hearthrug of my dining-room have seen the chairs, commencing with the heavy arm-chair and ending with the smaller arm-chair, all roll over on to their backs one after the other, no one touching them or being near them. The casual reader may ask the old question, *cui bono*—what is the use of such manifestations? And the reply is: to prove that a spirit is not merely 'an immaterial entity' leading some kind of vaporous, nebulous, infinite existence, but a definite being, capable of using and entering into definite relations with matter—(vide Acts xiii., v. 7 and 10; Luke xxiv., v. 42 and 44, also 30 and 31)—and that the life which awaits us on the other side is as real and natural as this though of a different nature. I mention these things because ridicule is thrown upon the coming of the coins. (A case of the spiritual sending, or providing, of a coin, will be found in the Bible, in Matthew xvii., v. 27.) All these, however, though wonderful, are the merest trifles in comparison with the wonders we have seen and heard. It is quite true that we have been the fortunate recipients for some years past of a series of manifestations entirely spontaneous and unsought, of a tenfold more wonderful nature than those which, in the year 1716, occurred in Epworth Parsonage, in Lincolnshire, in the family circle of the Rev. Charles Wesley, Rector of Epworth, and which are known to have deepened and most powerfully increased John Wesley's convictions concerning the reality of the spiritual world. During the last few years we have experienced practically the whole range of spiritual or psychical phenomena, and these marvels have come spontaneously and unsought. The most wonderful

of all have taken place either in broad daylight, or full lamp-light, spontaneously and unsought, in the presence of several witnesses, and the whole form such cumulative proof as to make conviction certain, and fraud or illusion impossible. We have had materialisations, the direct voice sounding throughout the house and going from room to room, constant displacement of all the furniture, in some cases seen to move and overthrow of itself, hundreds of volleys of bell-ringing, the booming of heavy bells like church bells in the house (there are no church bells within a mile-and-a-quarter), loud crashes and vibrations which have shaken the rooms and floors (*vide* Acts iv., 31), scores of apparitions of men, women, and children, also the apparition of a lady accompanied by a dog (both deceased some years), and seen in broad daylight by several observers—the dog on several occasions, nearly always in broad daylight, and both lady and dog recognised—columns of fire up to the ceiling, balls of fire, star-like lights and flashes, figures of men appearing out of columns of light, and again dissolving into clouds of light, the cloud then passing up through the ceiling; messages, consolations, warnings, by the direct voice and unsought; things moving of themselves, marvellous singing and amazing manifestations at the moment of the 'death' of a relation of whose sickness we did not even know; sounds of beautiful music, instruments hanging high up on the walls playing of themselves; scores of articles thrown, hands melting away in the grip when seized. These, and a score of other types of manifestations, have occurred month after month, in the presence of successive witnesses, and all unsought; they have come of themselves. We did not begin to investigate psychically until they had gone on for a very long time. We have had wonderful evidence during these investigations, but not one-tenth part so marvellous as those which have come in broad daylight, spontaneously and unsought. I believe there is a purpose in them, and I thank God for them, and esteem the experience as an inestimable privilege. My earnest prayer is that the experiences may be continued, may become even more evidential, and may redound to the glory of God. The first outcome of these wonders was that I was compelled to study the whole matter, and the result of that was my book, 'Man's Survival after Death, or The Other Side of Life,' published by Grant Richards. Perhaps those who do me the honour to read this, my defence, will also, for their own enlightenment, read my book, and then introduce it to their friends. What I teach, and what I believe, is set forth there with no uncertain voice. Some of our experiences are related therein, but the bulk of them will (D.V.), at a later date, form the subject of another work of quite a different type.

The Right Rev. W. Boyd-Carpenter sometime Bishop of Ripon, was president of the Society for Psychical Research last session, and at the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, recently held in Bradford, he said in his sermon: 'We stand on the threshold of a new era by the advent of a Church of God nobler than the world has ever seen, in which the large wide ranges of knowledge shall be brought into use.' Let us hope that the Church will seize the opportunity. . . . When will the modern Church claim her ancient spiritual powers? When will she understand St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, XXII. and XIV.? At present she practically knows nothing about them. I have devoted my life to this matter, and am prepared, 'in season and out of season,' to testify to the 'Communion of Saints, the Resurrection of the spiritual body, and the life everlasting.'

The Church of these days has practically lost all knowledge of spiritual phenomena, and has to rely on accounts of the happenings of from two thousand to four thousand years ago. She knows nothing of the real Communion of Saints such as the Church of the Apostles knew. Unless she quickly claims her ancient heritage of spiritual phenomena, she will be outclassed in the modern spiritual advance. Already, owing to her apathy, the vital quickening evidence and testimony to the reality of the spiritual world is coming, not from the churches, not from clergy or ministers of the gospel, with a few exceptions which may be counted on the fingers of one hand, but from the Psychical Researcher and the scientist.

SPIRITUALISM IN WALES.—At a well-attended Conference of South Wales Spiritualists at Cardiff on Sunday, April 6th, a new Union was successfully formed to unite the whole of the work in the district. Keen interest was displayed throughout the whole of the meetings. The desire to restore order and harmony in the movement and to reconcile the divided forces was the dominating spirit pervading the whole of the discussions. The prospect of things getting into better order is giving new hope to many who have made great sacrifices in the past. With devotion and unflinching ardour on the part of those in responsible positions, progress is now certain.—G. E. OWEN, Hon. Secretary.

ON THE 'UP GRADE.'

So many persons are giving way to pessimistic fear-thoughts that it is good to have an optimistic view of the changes that are going on around us. 'J. B.,' in 'The Christian World,' says:—

The things which are going out are the bad ones, and the things which are coming on are the good ones. War is going, cruelty is going, the cult of falsehoods is going. But see what is coming! Right amid the ages of violence, the ferocious barbarism of ancient man, in the very midst of all this, there appeared the tender plant of the spiritual culture. There grew in some elect hearts and minds the sense of love, of brotherhood, of purity, of righteousness, of eternal justice. There they were, faint and feeble ideas, unclad, unarmed, with no battalions at their allies, no strength from sword and gun. In their nakedness these ideas were set upon, battered, bruised, trampled under the iron forces of the world. The men who held them were unarmed; had nothing to fight with but their souls. And yet amid all the wars and tumults, amid all the wrecks and catastrophes, these things have survived; are here to-day, growing from more to more, their prospect secure, their victory certain. This is not rhetoric; it is the simple fact, for anyone to see who will look.

Religion, ridding itself of its illusions, founding itself anew on the facts of man's spiritual nature and destiny, claiming for itself all the true as well as all the good—pausing for a time, though it may be now, as often before, that it may better realise itself—is as safe, as abiding in its possession, as the eternity to which it belongs.

The greatest of all questions of survival is that of the survival of man after death. Everybody, materialists and idealists alike, believes in the indestructibility of matter. You may change it infinitely, but annihilate it never. If that is true of matter, be sure it is of spirit. The change here will be according to the laws of spirit. The beetle's soul will not be destroyed any more than its body. But its change, its future, will be according to the size and quality of its soul. That will find its place somewhere. The change in the man's soul will also be according to its size and quality. And that is exactly what religion has taught from the beginning.

BETTER THAN SCOLDING.

Not only teachers of troublesome children, but parents also, may find it worth while to try the experiment suggested by Mr Edward B. Warman, A.M., in a recent issue of 'The Nautilus.' He says:—

I claim that the most unruly pupil in school may be governed psychologically—that is, without the necessity of the teacher speaking a word. This is done by holding the thought for the child as if it were *his* thought, holding it in *first person singular*. . . . As a practical application, I give herewith but one of hundreds of successful experiments—not by myself, but by a member of one of my classes. A teacher in one of the public schools on this Western coast told me of her first experiment with one particular pupil—the worst in her school—one who never obeyed her cheerfully. If she asked him to clean the blackboard, he would do so in a sullen manner, make all the dust possible, and drop the eraser as often as he thought would be within the limit of his personal comfort. One afternoon, near the time of closing, she put her instruction into practice. As she sat at her desk she held this thought, mentally, *on him, over him, for him*: 'Please may I clean the board?' Thought travels with lightning speed between subjective minds, but does not always rise above the threshold of consciousness as quickly as in this case; for, almost instantly, to the great surprise of the teacher, the boy raised his hand and voiced her mental sentence: 'Please may I clean the board?' This being voluntary, apparently, to him, he did the work willingly and cheerfully; in fact, it was not work for him now, but pleasure. Besides, he did not make any unnecessary dust, and he seemed to have a much better grip on the eraser. He left the school with a smile instead of the usual frown, and there was established then and there a more harmonious relationship between teacher and pupil, and all without a word.

'THE EVIDENCE FOR AUTHENTIC TRANSMUTATIONS' was the title of an interesting address by Mr. Gaston De Mengel on the 11th inst., delivered to the members and friends of the Alchemical Society at the International Club, Regent-street. The lecture was well discussed, the chairman (Mr. H. Stanley Redgrove, B.Sc., F.C.S.) taking a rather agnostic attitude. A full report will appear in the April issue of the 'Journal' of the society.

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A LETTER AND A REPLY.

We are asked to reply in these columns to a letter from a friend and supporter of our cause, who puts forward some objections based on the scarcity of evidences.

We have dealt with such questions as he raises on previous occasions, but although to refer him to past issues of 'LIGHT' would be a simple course for us, it might not be a satisfactory one to him, so for his benefit and that of others with similar difficulties we return to the subject once more.

To commence, then, he confesses to disappointment with Spiritualism: 'it seems (like all religions) to demand faith, and not to give proof.' Something depends on what is meant by proof. If he means proof of the existence of a force in Nature that can move objects without physical contact, and reveal the existence of intelligence apart from the physical brain—well, that has been proved over and over again, and is still being proved in many quarters, although such demonstrations are not—for very good and sufficient reasons—so public and plentiful as they once were. It was once only necessary to procure admission to one of the many circles in which the phenomena were displayed—no very difficult matter as a rule—and the inquirer got, if not absolute proof, at least enough to convince him that no empty claims had been put forward. Then abuses crept in. The circles were invaded by crowds of undesirables—phenomena hunters, medium baiters, open or secret enemies, intent—for their own ends—on bringing the subject into disrepute. Sinister psychical conditions were introduced, the phenomena became confused, seeming at times to hover on the borderland between the real and the counterfeit, and sometimes passing completely over to the spurious side. The genuine mediums—most of them sensitive, highly strung, unsophisticated people—suffered a martyrdom, and one by one abandoned a vocation so painful and thankless. 'Human vivisection,' one of them called it. Impostors came in with clever duplications of the original phenomena, and were exposed again and again, generally by Spiritualists themselves, for the seasoned Spiritualist is a better expert on his subject than the scientist or the conjurer. But the physical phenomena did not disappear; they 'retired to private life,' so to speak.

The earnest and judicious experimenters formed their own private circles, developed their own mediums, looked askance at investigators from without, and let the world go by. And then, having, like the 'base Judean,' thrown a pearl away, the frivolous crowd of curiosity-seekers (amongst whom we do not class our correspondent) lifted up their voices in lamentation over the dearth of wonders. We, too, regretted that for evidential purposes they were no longer so accessible as of old, although the reason was plainly apparent, and we had to acknowledge that in the

providence of life it was doubtless a good thing. But in the meantime the 'true men' had been at work recording and classifying the phenomena, and their records remain.

But all this did not mean the eclipse of mediumship on its higher side. Clairvoyance, trance-speaking, telepathy, automatism, and psychometry went on from more to more. But they remained a good deal under the old cloud, and their followers were left to struggle against the difficulties resulting from ignorance of the mental conditions involved. Clear and indubitable proofs of spirit action were mingled with much that was at best doubtful. The craven-spirited and the time-servers deserted and left the men of courage and purpose to fight—a winning battle. For the battle is being won. The truth of the spiritual nature of man is sharing the destiny of truth everywhere—it is coming uppermost. The world must have it in one form or another. The last few years have witnessed the shattering of old dogmas concerning the nature of matter and the limits of scientific possibility, the rise of Bergson with his spiritual idea of life—received as a new gospel—the cordial reception of Eucken and his doctrines, and the revival of Mysticism.

And now to pass to another count in the indictment. Our visitors from the other world might, an they would (or could), aid us in a variety of ways, and incidentally afford us world-wide proof by revealing scientific facts, which we have now to discover by long and painful research. 'They might have told us years ago that malarial fever was carried by mosquitoes, and thus have saved countless lives.' They might have told us that Peary had discovered the North Pole, and of the fate of the heroic Scott party in the Antarctic regions. And apparently they did not. But why draw the line at these things? They might, on the hypothesis (not a sound one, by the way) that they are vastly superior to us in knowledge and intensely interested in this world, reveal all the secrets of life, and then there would be no particular reason for our being on earth at all. The boys in the upper form having handed the 'key' and the answers to the examination papers to the boys in the lower class, the juniors would soon polish off their lessons—but they would not have learned much! We have every sympathy with our correspondent's difficulties—they are natural enough, and show a praiseworthy disposition not to be satisfied with little. But we think the world's affairs are ordered by a higher wisdom than his or ours.

The facts of Spiritualism have been proved a thousand times over, and they are still susceptible of fresh demonstration. But we cannot produce phenomena at will, or direct the forms they shall take. We can only provide the conditions and study the laws under which they occur, of which as yet we know very little. What we do know is that the control and manipulation of material objects is not the most natural expression of the presence and powers of spiritual beings. It occurs frequently enough, not only in circles, but in the numerous cases of psychic phenomena at large recorded in history, and still from time to time reported in the Press. There have been examples quite recently. Some of them are amazing and significant enough to attract the serious attention of the world at large. But they do not. The public read, gasp their wonder (or incredulity), express an opinion or develop a theory, and then forget all about it. Precisely the same fate would attend the suggested psychical transit of a newspaper from London to New York under test conditions. It would mean a column or so in the papers, and a 'nine days' wonder,' during which most of the conversation would turn on the question of how it was 'worked.' It would be merely a 'clever fake' to most of the populace. And in

a month it would be forgotten. For people, as a rule, where they are not afraid of the subject, are not interested in it. They have (they believe) more important matters to attend to, and indeed they are really more important—to most people. But there is an increasing number of thinking persons who *are* interested, who see the tremendous significance of the subject, and it is with these people we are concerned. We do not mind their criticism or their objections—we rather welcome them. For if our truth can be exploded by rigid scrutiny, then it is not a truth, and we can bestow our labours more profitably elsewhere. But we have no qualms—every new development of thought, every extension of view adds to our certitude. We are even content to be laughed at, feeling assured that in the end we shall be amongst those who laugh the longest because they laugh last.

SPIRITUAL EMANCIPATION BY THE ELIMINATION OF FEAR.

By E. W. WALLIS.

(Continued from page 177.)

When we extend our range of vision and look at life as a whole we shall include, not exclude. We shall then take in the psychic side of our nature and recognise that we are progressive sons and daughters of the living God. We shall realise that personality persists beyond the incident of death; that the law of continuity insures the preservation of identity, the maintenance of individual consciousness and the retention by us of all knowledge, ability, insights and understandings for use on that other plane of life to which we are all tending. In other words, character survives the shock of death, and the consequences of all our motives, actions and loves—wrong or right—affect us and tend to limit or enlarge our sphere of operations, to decrease or increase our pain or pleasure, to render us unfit or increasingly fit to live the spiritual life. We must recognise that the law of life is the law of action, of triumph, of ascent not fall, of growth not failure, of order and wholesomeness, of use and enjoyment, and abandon the idea that 'man was made to mourn,' that this world is 'a vale of tears,' that the ideal existence here is self-surrender and dependence, and that man must be lifted out of and saved from the difficulties of life by supernatural intervention. Since all experience tends to enlighten and educate us, if we desire to learn, the purpose of our existence seems to be that we shall grow in self-knowledge and, by self-unfoldment and the exercise of our powers in altruistic services to the world, not only attain to self-fulfilment but co-operate with the Divine mind and purpose by contributing our quota to that stream of tendency that makes for righteousness. If this be so, surely our attitude should be confident, trustful, and strong. Just as the healthy child experiences the natural joy of living and abandons itself to the delights of vigorous action in the mere pleasure of being alive, so the evolved and educated man thrills with the joyous consciousness of power, of understanding, of successfully living his life. Strong and serene, he fulfils the law. He knows that only by loving obedience to the divine Right can true liberty and blessedness be won :—

There is no summit you may not attain,
No purpose which you may not yet achieve,
If you will wait serenely, and believe
Each seeming loss is but a step to gain.

That which you most desire awaits your word ;
Throw wide the door and bid it enter in.
Speak, and the strong vibrations shall be stirred ;
Speak, and above earth's loud, unmeaning din
Your silent declarations shall be heard.
All things are possible to God's own kin.*

—(Applause.)

When I chose my subject I thought that I would introduce to your notice two American books, written by Mr. Horace Fletcher, entitled 'Menticulture; or, The A B C of True Living,' and 'Happiness, as Found in Forethought minus Fearthought.' Mr. Fletcher says :—

The theory that I have built up is based on a proper estimation of the limitations of mental weaknesses, a discovery that they have roots, and also that they can be 'pulled up by the roots' and disposed of like any other weeds, only that the task, being mental and not physical, can be more easily performed.

Here, I think, the author is rather too sanguine; the task may have been an easy one to him, but I have found it more difficult than he suggests, and others to whom I have sought to propound his theory, and who have tried it, more or less earnestly, have been compelled to admit that they, too, have found it no easy matter to root out fear—to banish fear-thoughts from their minds and install in their stead the strong affirmative thoughts which make worry and fear impossible. Mr. Fletcher tells how one day, when Professor Fenoloso had been enlarging on the wonderful degree of culture and self-control attained by some of his Japanese friends, he begged the professor to tell him the process of his discipline. In reply, he was informed that, as a start, so that he might begin to grow, he must 'get rid of anger and worry.' 'But,' said Mr. Fletcher, 'is that possible?' 'Yes,' replied the professor, 'it is possible to the Japanese, and ought to be possible to us.' Startled by this suggestion, Mr. Fletcher pondered over it until it grew into the question: 'If it is possible to get rid of anger and worry, why is it necessary to have them at all?' He decided that it was not necessary, and he says, 'From the instant I realised that these cancer spots of worry and anger were removable they left me. With the discovery of their weakness they were exorcised. From that time life has had an entirely changed aspect.' It took him some months to feel absolute security in his new position; but as the usual occasions for anger and worry presented themselves over and over again without those feelings being excited, he no longer dreaded them or guarded against them, and was amazed at the increased energy and vigour of his mind—at his strength to meet situations of all kinds, and his disposition to love and appreciate everything. The world became good to him. But, he says, 'I am sure the change is not so much in the world as in me. I have become, as it were, sensitive only to the rays of good, as some photographic films of recent invention are sensitive only to certain single-coloured rays of light.'

To illustrate his position Mr. Fletcher says :—

Without the slightest feeling of annoyance or impatience, I have seen a train that I had planned to take with a good deal of interest and pleasurable anticipation, move out of a station without me, because my luggage did not arrive. The porter from the hotel came running and panting into the station just as the train pulled out of sight. When he saw me he looked as if he feared a scolding, and began to tell of being blocked in a crowded street and unable to get out. When he had finished I said to him, 'It doesn't matter at all, you couldn't help it, so we will try it again to-morrow. Here is your fee, I am sorry you had all this trouble in earning it.' The look of surprise that came over his face was so filled with pleasure that I was repaid on the spot for the delay in my departure. Next day he would not accept a cent for the service, and he and I are friends for life.

Here is another instance :—

A young man whose employer, a publisher, was afflicted with the fuss-and-fret habit, unconsciously contracted the disease. His former robust good health gave way to languor that induced dyspepsia and other contingent disorders, until suicide stared him in the face and haunted his dreams. Someone suggested that worry and anger were the causes of his ill-health and unhappiness. This led him, with his systematic business habits, to keep a careful record of the instances when worry made its predictions to see if they were true or false. At the end of a month he found that only three per cent. of the predictions were even remotely realised.

In his second work, Mr. Fletcher says :—

More than forty years of observation, and upwards of three years of study, analysis and arrangement with a fixed purpose, have enabled me to suggest changes of attitude towards the problems of life that have not failed to bring more or less strength and happiness to all who have adopted them. The underlying cause of all weakness and unhappiness in man, heredity and

* Where not otherwise stated, the poetical quotations are from the writings of Mrs. Wilcox, whose poems are published in this country by Messrs. Gay and Hancock, Ltd., 12 and 13, Henrietta-street, Covent Garden, W.C.—E. W. W.

environment to the contrary notwithstanding, has always been, and is still, *weak-habit-of-thought*. This is proven by the observed instances in which *strong-habit-of-thought* has invariably made its possessors superior to heredity, to environment, to illness, and to weaknesses of all kinds, and has redeemed them from non-success and misery to the enjoyment of success, honour, and happiness. It has also been proved that none are so ill-favoured as to be exempt from regeneration by the influence of optimistic thinking, and none so plain, nor even so ugly, as judged by the world's standards of beauty, but that the radiance of pure thought will make them more beautiful. Happiness is not dependent upon wealth, and wealth does not necessarily bring happiness, but both are dependent upon *good-habit-of-thought*; for *good-habit-of-thought* develops *appreciation*, which is the measure of all wealth, and appreciation leads to the *habit-of-feeling* and the *habit-of-action*, which produce happiness. Notwithstanding the admonitions of great teachers and the lessons taught by all of Nature's processes of growth, especially the teachings of later evolution; fear—fear of death, fear of disaster, fear of non-attainment, fear of non-preferment, and fear of the things that *never happen as feared*, and the anger and worry growing out of these fears—have been looked upon as afflictions necessary to humanity, repressible only during life, and eradicable only at the change called death. I have demonstrated beyond the possibility of doubt that the *fear element* can be eliminated out of forethought as soon as it becomes evident that it is unnecessary, separable, and eliminable, and that the *energy* and *desire* for progress and growth are beautifully stimulated as the result of its elimination.

If conditions are intelligently arranged most men will eagerly mould themselves into good men to fit conditions. We should afford leisure to give attention to the Higher Self, and in so doing realise that man is not simply the highest among animals but is endowed with divine possibilities, and that the power to realise these potentialities resides within. When this is recognised it will no longer be respectable to display only animal characteristics, and society will soon refuse to permit anyone born under the protection of the nation—the social family—to be ignorant, or poor, or idle, or useless, or merely ornamental. In fact, the era of the three great A's—Appreciation, Attraction and Altruism—is upon us and it will soon inaugurate the Age of the Higher Self.

True spiritual development begins with conscious individual effort, with the choice of the spiritual ideal. The spiritual life is not like a garment, which may be put on for occasions, not a mood which we work ourselves into for the sake of talking beautifully or making a prayer. It is and must be a *habit of life*. Every action should be inspired by a deep consciousness of the Spirit. It is a life of uncompromising consecration to the highest ideals of love and service. As you sow in the inner world you will reap in the outer. The law is perfect, beneficent, eternal. Every man shall receive in exact proportion to his desire, his trust, and his love.

There is one aspect of the injurious effect of *fear* which Spiritualists should consider. Every now and then someone paints the dangers of Spiritualism in lurid colours, and endeavours to frighten the reader away from the subject. He is assured that to submit to spirit influence is to commit a 'great psychological crime.' Such warnings, red flags, or danger signals are all appeals to *fear*, based upon ignorance, prejudice or misconception.

It is a well-known fact that human beings are subject to wayward impulses and intrusive thoughts and feelings which have to be thrust aside and ignored. Children are taught that these naughty thoughts and feelings are the temptations of the devil, but they are, as a rule, of mundane origin and are almost invariably due to psychological changes and conditions. The relics of the old fear remain, however, and many people, on the alert to find some scapegoat as an excuse for their weakness or folly, lay the blame upon evil spirits. Thinking of what they have heard regarding the wiles of the devil and the power of 'seducing' 'satanic' spirits, instead of trying to understand the cause, or causes, of their feelings, sensitives become morbid and pessimistic and torment themselves with the notion that evil spirits prompt their thoughts and impel them to unwise or improper courses of action. It is at such times of weakness that the wayward impulses of passion are strongest, and the sufferer's alarm is followed by worry, nervous dread and sleeplessness. When fear-thoughts possess the mind it turns inward and exaggerates the danger. The sufferer loses confidence and self-control, and, instead of resolutely maintaining a level head and a self-possessed, cheerful frame of mind, dwells upon his

troubles and runs great risk of becoming a monomaniac. In such cases Spiritualism is unjustly blamed for the weakness and folly of the victims, who, had they been patient and careful, would have avoided the mistakes which caused them so much unnecessary distress. In many cases of alleged obsession the explanation will undoubtedly be found in the ignorance of the sensitive and of the operating spirit, and their mutual misunderstandings; while in not a few instances the trouble is due to the inquirer's excess of zeal and the influence of fear upon his mind. Here, as elsewhere, order is heaven's first law, purity and strong purpose, confidence and love are safeguards against evil, and those who are well-informed and honest need never fear the threats or influences of those of lower spiritual conditions. The Sister of Mercy, intent on her errands of love and altruistic service, can pass fearlessly through the hells of the slums, uncontaminated and unmolested; so, too, may those who possess their souls in peace and good-will join hands with the angels of light without fear, in loving service to suffering humanity.

No one has any right to go about with a face as black as a thunder-cloud, poisoning the mental air with gloomy fears and forebodings. We owe it to others, as well as ourselves, to be as bright and helpful as we can: to make the most and best of ourselves and our conditions in a reasonable way.

This reminds me of what Mrs. Steinthal said recently: Calling on a couple in Yorkshire who were keeping their golden wedding, she found the wife busy polishing an old-fashioned warming-pan. 'Why, Mary,' she said, 'that is so beautifully bright it cannot need further polishing.'

'Aye, but I'm going to polish it as long as I live,' she replied, 'for it's this warming-pan that's kept peace between me and John these fifty years. When we'd been wed a bit, and John went out one morning without being so kind to me as I'd thought he ought to be, I said to myself I'd give him a bit of my mind when he returned.'

'It was the day for cleaning the brasses, and when I'd polished the warming-pan bright I caught the reflection of my own face in it. "Laws! do I look like that?" I asked myself. Well, if I did look like that, I told myself, I must never let John see it. Since then, if ever things go wrong and I feel myself worried and cross, I just take down the warming-pan and polish the temper away.' (Laughter.)

On the principle that example is better than precept, and in view of the fact that we are all centres of psychic influences, we can do the most good in the world by setting an example of fortitude under trial, of plucky cheerfulness in harassing circumstances, and of goodwill even towards those who wrong us.

I am not advocating indifference, selfishness, self-assertion, obtrusive and egotistic self-confidence, or unfeeling hard-heartedness. But I do advocate that we should, with all sincerity and sympathy, try to look on the bright side of life and of people, to scatter seeds of hope and encouragement not only by spoken words, but by sunny smiles and a cheerful outlook. We none of us know how much good influence we unconsciously exert simply by looking bright and well and by manifesting a strong, buoyant spirit. Some people, as we well know, are wet blankets—they carry three kinds of trouble: all they ever had, all they have now, and all they expect to have. Such folk take the heart out of us, because they seldom say a kind or an encouraging word. There are others who make us feel that it is good to be alive. They are centres of health and healing, and Spiritualists know what that means if any persons do. Our old friend, John Page Hopps, always said it did him good to attend our meetings—he went away feeling stronger and better than when he came. The reason was that he himself was so bright, cheery, and optimistic that we sunned ourselves in his sunshine, and expanded in the warmth of his spirit, and so gave him back of our life-forces in return for his stimulating influence. How true it is that we get what we give—we find what we seek! In helping others we shall ourselves be helped and comforted. We should, as a writer, unknown to me, says:—

Comfort one another;

For the way is growing dreary,

The feet are often weary,

And the heart is very sad.

There is heavy burden bearing

When it seems that none are caring,

And we half forget that ever we were glad.

Comfort one another ;
 With the hand clasp close and tender,
 With the sweetness love can render,
 And looks of friendly eyes.
 Do not wait with grace unspoken
 While life's daily bread is broken ;
 Gentle speech is oft like manna from the skies.

Comfort one another ;
 There are words of music ringing
 Down the ages, sweet as singing
 Of the happy hosts above.
 Ransomed saint and mighty angel
 Lift the grand, deep-voiced evangel,
 As they come to give us comfort with their love.

Spiritual meditation of the right sort is joyful, uplifting, outgoing ; it is soul-communion in the kingdom of the omnipresent Spirit, the heaven of peace, of divine love and beauty. Serenity cannot be attained in a moment, but why should we not gradually eliminate a thousand fears, anxious forebodings and burdens ? Half our aches and pains are due to our excesses, our follies, and our nervousness, and the other half to Nature's remedial processes. An unknown correspondent sends me from Switzerland, as 'a very old corroboration' of my lecture, the following quaint lines :—

Let to-morrow take care of to-morrow—
 Short and dark as our life may appear,
 We make it still shorter by sorrow,
 Still darker by folly and fear.
 Half our troubles are half our invention,
 And often from blessings conferred
 We've shrunk in the wild apprehension
 Of evils that never occurred.

To the degree that we attain poise and serenity we shall be oblivious of the methods of growth, for spiritual self-mastery is then a habit. All growth is from within outwards, and it is governed by the law of spiritual evolution.

We hear much of evolution, but we too seldom think of its corollary—*involution*. We cannot unroll and disclose that which is not enwrapped, or inherent, and the facts of evolution ought to give us confidence, for if they mean anything, they preach to us a gospel of the ascent of life : of triumph of mind in and through matter : of order and right in the physical realm : of righteousness, beauty and perfection in the moral and spiritual realm. If the universe is a guided process, then the Infinite Mind is outworking His unceasing purpose, and we are part of that process ; necessary to it, participants in it. We should not be mere pawns. We must, at least, be knights, if as yet we may not be kings. Surely, if we trace our heredity back to God and extend our thought of personal conscious existence beyond the incident of death, we shall then realise that our place here is between the animals and the angels, that we partake of the nature and powers of both—that it is our life work to bring the animal into harness so that it shall serve the angel. I firmly believe that we are able to do this and, sooner or later, shall triumph over fear and establish faith—reasonable, optimistic and happy faith. As spirit beings we must win our freedom and ultimately attain intelligent and joyous at-one-ment with the Universal Life and Love. It is by such confident, optimistic affirmation, by such prophetic, joyous visioning, that we may all preserve our souls in patience and in peace, acquire strength to banish fear, and know that out of what we call evil good will come. (Applause.)

In closing, let me say that I regard it as a spiritual crisis in life when we realise that we can win spiritual emancipation by eliminating fear and refusing to be worried, annoyed or made angry. By calmly and purposefully cultivating an optimistic and kindly mental attitude, we can gain strength to live wisely and usefully, and be helpful to others both by our example and by our influence. The secret of success and happiness, ay, of the spiritual life, will be found when we readily recognise only the good, and dwell in the light of truth and love. We may lapse into the old moods time after time, and grow nervous, irritable and depressed, but if we persevere we shall learn to rely on our true selves and use our spirit powers, trustfully and joyously, until the habit is formed of cheery, affirmative thinking and generous loving—so that at last our perfect love will cast out all fear, we shall respond to the inshining of the

all-sufficing love of God and hear the call of the Spirit to come up higher. Ella Wheeler Wilcox points the way when she says :—

Let there be many windows to your soul,
 That all the glory of the universe
 May beautify it. Not the narrow pane
 Of one poor creed can catch the radiant rays
 That shine from countless sources. Tear away
 The blinds of superstition ; let the light
 Pour through fair windows broad as Truth itself
 And high as God.

Why should the spirit peer
 Through some priest-curtained orifice and grope
 Along dim corridors of doubt, when all
 The splendour from unfathomed seas of space
 Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love ?
 Sweep up the debris of decaying faiths ;
 Sweep down the cobwebs of worn-out beliefs,
 And throw your soul wide open to the light
 Of Reason and of Knowledge. Tune your ear
 To all the wordless music of the stars,
 And to the voice of Nature, and your heart
 Shall turn to Truth and Goodness, as the plant
 Turns to the sun ; a thousand unseen hands
 Reach down to help you to their peace-crowned heights ;
 And all the forces of the firmament
 Shall fortify your strength. Be not afraid
 To thrust aside half-truths, and grasp the whole.

—(Loud applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN remarked that they had had an excellent paper, though not one which readily lent itself to discussion. He himself felt that the easiest way to subdue fear was to realise that there was a Power that was working for the good of all, and that we held in our hands the future of the race. We were now what our parents and forefathers helped us to become, and the future of the race would depend, to a large extent, on what we were. If we realised the existence of this Power and of our own responsibility, it would be easier to overcome our dread of the future.

DR. ABRAHAM WALLACE, in moving a hearty vote of thanks for what he regarded as a very beautiful and interesting essay, pointed out that the scientific aspect of pathology was all on Mr. Wallis's side. He thought it was about twenty years ago that Mr. Wallis gave a most interesting inspirational address called 'Hell Disestablished.' But though hell was disestablished among Spiritualists, it was not among Church people. In the last number of 'The Two Worlds,' the Editor, Mr. Morse, commented on a revival by the Rev. Stanley Parker of the old allegation that Spiritualism had sent many people to lunatic asylums. That had long ago been proved to be a lie, and in this connection Dr. Wallace desired to mention his own experience at the first visit of Moody and Sankey to this country. He was then assistant to a great surgeon in Scotland, and for many weeks the new cases brought before them were the result of religious excitement caused by the addresses of the evangelists. In the many years that had since elapsed he had not seen any case of insanity resulting through Spiritualism. Yet people still went back to the old absurd idea. As regarded the meetings of the Alliance, he did not see why they should always go outside for speakers, and he would suggest that next session the Chairman (Mr. Withall) should give his own experiences. He (Dr. Wallace) would be pleased to take the chair for him. (Applause.)

MR. A. HOLDEN, in seconding the vote of thanks, suggested that Mr. Wallis's address, besides appearing in 'LIGHT,' should be published separately as a pamphlet, in which case he would be pleased to take a hundred copies.

MR. WILKINS, supporting the motion, said he regarded Mr. Wallis as one of the greatest influences to-day in the Spiritualistic movement. With regard to the power of the absence of fear, the Prime Minister said the other day at a dinner of doctors that he did not fear work and was never afraid of being ill, and the result had been that for twenty-three years he had never been in bed with illness and had never taken more than three bottles of physic. Archdeacon Wilberforce, three years ago, said that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred when a patient got well God cured him by taking away his fears, but the doctor got the fees. (Laughter.)

The resolution having been carried unanimously, Mr. Wallis expressed his thanks and the meeting closed.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

'The House of the Other World,' by Violet Tweedale (cloth, 6s.; John Long, Ltd., Norris-street, Haymarket, W.), is a fascinating book—fascinating not only for the sense of mystery which overhangs the narrative, but for its charming nature descriptions, for the authoress has at once a facile pen and a keen appreciation of natural beauty. The terrible storm in which a part of the old house is wrecked, leading to the discovery of the body of poor Geoffrey Fenwick, whose long unrevealed murder had been the cause of the hauntings, is a piece of very vivid word-painting. Clairvoyance plays a large part in the narrative. We are less favourably impressed by Richard Washburne Child's 'The Blue Wall' (cloth, 6s.; Constable & Co., Ltd., Boston and New York). As the alliterative sub-title informs us, it is 'a story of strangeness and struggle,' and its atmosphere is decidedly creepy. Happily, however, the beautiful heroine suffers no permanent harm from the strange influence of which she is for a time the victim, and even the villain of the story, though a decadent of the most miserable type, has his redeeming features.

We are pleased to see that Spiritualism is gaining ground in Ireland and to learn that our friends at Belfast, having rented a fine new hall, held very successful opening services on Sunday last, at which able addresses were delivered by Mr. Spencer, of Nantwich. A friend has kindly presented a fine organ, and the president and his co-workers have worked ardently, the vice-president building a useful platform and Mrs. Beattie, Miss Jenkins and their helpers beautifully decorating the hall. There is every prospect of a good work being accomplished by the society.

However much they may differ from some of her teachings, Spiritualists hold Mrs. Besant in high esteem for her lofty aims and generosity of character and will appreciate the following pleasant little tribute paid her by Mr. George Bernard Shaw. (We quote from Mr. Holbrook Jackson's book, 'Bernard Shaw,' published by Grant Richards.) In 1886, early in his literary career, Mr. Shaw became 'novelist in ordinary' to a monthly magazine, 'Our Corner,' owned and edited by Mrs. Besant. 'It had,' he says, 'the singular habit of paying for its contributions, and was, I am afraid, to some extent a device of Mrs. Besant's for relieving necessitous young propagandists without wounding their pride by open almsgiving. She was an incorrigible benefactress, and probably revenged herself for my freely expressed scorn for this weakness by drawing on her private account to pay for my jejune novels.'

'The Peacemaker,' by W. Winslow Hall, M.D. (stiff cover, 1s. net, A. and C. Fifield, 13, Clifford's Inn, E.C.), is a parable in the form of a play. Four nations are typified by four neighbours who, suspecting one another of burglarious intent, go to great expense to defend their respective grounds with guards and man-traps and spring guns. Other characters represent the three leading parties in the State—Conservative, Liberal and Labour. Much at first against her will, one of the neighbours is persuaded to dismiss her guards and abandon her defences. As a result she discovers that the only foes she needs to fear are those of her own household, and in making that discovery she attains for the first time the sense of true security, and with it a calm happiness and content unknown before. The other three neighbours learn in succession the same lesson. Instrumental in working the transformation in their relations to one another is a visionary character, 'The Tramp' (emblematic of the love that resists not evil), who, in differing guise, crosses the path of each in turn, and in whom at last they all find union. Pray heaven that Dr. Hall's beautiful vision may yet be fulfilled!

'Quicunque Vult' is the title of a sixpenny pamphlet (The Mission Depot, 603, Seven Sisters-road, Tottenham, N.) which has been sent to us by its author, Pastor James B. Morton Barnes, B.A. (Cantab), an 'Ex-Unitarian Minister, now Free Catholic Missionary.' It is, we are told, 'an Exposition of the Athanasian Creed and a rational vindication of the Catholic faith.' It is a curious production, but the closely-printed pages of small type are very trying to the eyes, and the subject-matter does not interest us in the least. A so-called 'scientific explanation of the resurrection' is given at the end. The author writes confidently, and gives a description of the resurrection of Jesus almost as though he had been an eye-witness on both the spiritual and physical planes. But the question forces itself on one's mind, How does he know that what he writes is true? We cannot regard it as anything but the work of a man with a bias and a vivid imagination.

Are the days of the Inquisition to be revived? It would almost seem like it, for, according to the newspapers, a Commission is to be appointed to try the Rev. C. L. Tweedale for his opinions. We are glad to hear it, although we sympathise with Mr. Tweedale, for it will necessarily be a trying ordeal. While the Commission is at work perhaps it will deal with the Bishop of London, Archdeacon Wilberforce, the Rev. Arthur Chambers, the Rev. A. J. Waldron and the many other clergymen who are firmly convinced of the facts of spirit presence and manifestation. Archdeacon Colley was most anxious that he should be tried for his opinions, but no one would gratify him. Seemingly the Rev. Tweedale is to receive different treatment.

A remarkable story comes from Murphysboro, Ill., U.S.A. It is to the effect that, recently, a number of prisoners confessed their guilt, and when an effort was made to ascertain why they did so, they declared that they had been visited in their cells by the ghost of one J. F. Jones, a tall, thin man, who was hanged in the gaol yard in 1896. A negro prisoner declared that after the gaoler had locked the cells, and the lights had been put out, he saw the ghost, tall and thin, apparently enter through the bars. It told him that he would be hanged if he did not plead guilty. Then it disappeared. The prisoner declared that he was wide awake; and that he had seen the apparition on other occasions. Eight other prisoners also pleaded guilty in a similar manner. 'The remarkable fact that one murderer was frightened enough by something to stop his trial when he had a good chance of getting off, pleaded guilty and took a thirty-year sentence gladly, and the other information of scores of confessions from the same cause have led to the appointment by the Governor of an investigating commission.'

'The rewards of life are for service, and the penalties of life are for self-indulgence.' So says Elbert Hubbard in 'Nash's' Magazine for April. He adds: 'We preserve our sanity only as we forget self in service.' To be very much awake in the daytime and very much asleep at night is possible only 'to people who eat right food, think good thoughts, and observe the everyday common laws of health.' Mr. Hubbard holds that 'it is a mistake to blame the medical fraternity,' and says: 'Doctors are men, just like the rest of us, neither better nor worse, and as we grow better we have better doctors. We have better doctors nowadays than ever before in all history.' Which is doubtless true; so also is Mr. Hubbard's further claim: 'Health is the most natural thing in the world'; and his closing advice is good: 'Work, play, study, laugh—flavour all with love, and you have the key to happy living.' 'The Lordship of Love' is the title of a fine high-toned article by Marie Corelli, which, however, is greatly marred by her depreciatory and unkind references to the women who, however mistaken they may be, are fighting for their sex and for their fuller share in determining their status and the future well-being of the race.

A great many British Spiritualists and mediums have gone to America and Canada, and it is pleasing to know that they continue their work for Spiritualism in the lands of their adoption. Dr. George B. Warne, President of the National Spiritualists' Association, writing in 'The Progressive Thinker' respecting a meeting in New Jersey, says: 'We again had proof of the debt owed by American Spiritualists to their brethren of England, for each one of the three participating mediums came from Halifax, or its immediate vicinity, in the mother country. They were Mrs. Emma Binns, of Irvington, and Mrs. S. Senior and Mr. C. W. Bentley, of Newark; each one of whom by manner and matter illustrated the substantial quality which characterises English Spiritualists, without having recourse to self-advertising sensationalism in the name of mediumship. The greatest possible accuracy of communications, combined with a sacred seriousness of deportment during their delivery, serve to place Spiritualist services upon a much higher plane than that of vaudeville wonderment and mere curiosity craving. It is almost superfluous to say that each one of the mediums to whom we listened that evening is an ardent friend of Lyceums, and because of connection with them in their former home is grounded in the fundamental philosophy of Spiritualism and qualified to present it.'

Dr. Warne also writes: 'Judge Reynolds of the Brooklyn division is reported to have used this language in the case of Mrs. Carrie Batty, a reputable medium, arrested on complaint of a woman detective sent out by Deputy Police Commissioner Dougherty: "There are many people of this sect who believe firmly that they receive advice from the spirits of those who have departed, and I do not think, anyway, that this charge has been proven, for there is not a preponderance of evidence for the prosecution. I'll discharge Mrs. Batty." Mrs. Batty herself

testified: "I did not tell the witness anything. The loved ones told it to me. I may have given her advice, but I did not tell her fortune. Our only province is to give advice as ministers of the Church, just as any minister of any Church would advise a parishioner." The articles of incorporation of Mrs. Batty's church thus defined the duties of the minister: "The minister shall hold himself at all times in readiness to give spiritual aid and assistance in private interviews or otherwise to such persons who in good faith, professing to believe in the declarations and principles of our faith, shall seek spiritual comfort; he shall not exact any fee therefor. Any contribution voluntarily given shall be the property of this corporation."

An esteemed contributor, who writes from Rome, says: "I took the opportunity of calling on the Editor of 'Luce e Ombra' about a fortnight ago, and both he and Signor Bruers took great trouble in showing me over the premises of the society in the Via Varese. We also had some interesting talk, and Signor Marzorati kindly allowed me to examine a series of stereoscopic flashlight photographs, illustrating successive stages in the formation of the cloud-like mediumistic emanation. I have been looking into that remarkable work by Messrs. Matla and Zaalberg Van Zelst entitled, 'Le Mystère de la Mort.' If the results they profess to have obtained with their apparatus, the 'Dynamistograph,' are confirmed by independent investigators, psychical research will have definitely entered upon an entirely new phase. Dr. Fiocca Novi should find this type of psychical research to his liking. I, personally, am convinced that no headway will ever be made until the physical phenomena are grappled with on physical lines. Hitherto the metaphysical theorists have had it all their own way—with the result that there has been no real advance in these matters since the experiments of Crookes."

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

Under this heading we propose to devote space to brief letters of inquiry and replies thereto from our readers.

A Question Regarding Consciousness.

SIR,—I take it that you, like Theosophists and others, absolutely believe in the indestructibility of spirit, that you argue its power and its ever-existent state that can never be put aside by any chance in any way. Very well, then, granted! Why is it that when a medium is in a so-called trance and believed to be controlled by another spirit, that the spirit of that medium is for the time put aside, taken literally and put away? I quote from Sir W. E. Cooper's book on 'Spiritual Science,' wherein he quotes the Rev. Arthur Chambers' testimony. Mr. Chambers asked a medium to tell him whose spirit controlled his body, and when answered, he again asked, 'Does the medium know that his body is controlled?' and was answered in the negative. Mr. Chambers then asked the control where the spirit of the medium was, and was told that it was there in the room, but unconscious for the time being, as he, the spirit control, had taken possession, so to speak, of the medium's body. Now I ask, how is it possible to put spirit aside in an unconscious state? Can spirit be made voluntarily or involuntarily unconscious? I should be pleased if someone well versed in these investigations will tell me.—Yours, &c.,

AN EARNEST INQUIRER.

An Appreciative Reader of 'Light.'

SIR,—If the one to whom I (among others) am indebted for the receipt of 'LIGHT' could know how much it means to me week by week, he or she would be more than repaid. In my life of weakness and suffering, of loneliness and harsh poverty, it comes, indeed, as a ray of light. I read it from cover to cover, and still have five days a week to wait for the next number. And your list of books for sale! How they make one long, with actual pain, to read them! I have to thank the writer of the leading articles in 'LIGHT' for many a much-needed lesson in patience and tolerance. To myself I call that page 'The Tower of Sanity,' into which I climb, mentally, after the hurly-burly of conflicting opinions, the breathlessness of seemingly impossible theories, and the varied fallings short of hope.

We, my husband and I, cannot claim to be Spiritualists by conviction—through proof—for we have witnessed no actual phenomena, greatly though we desire to. It is the beautiful philosophy of Spiritualism, with its solid foundation of justice, and its ever extending vistas of use, knowledge and delight that has claimed our consciousness. And out of this consciousness I say 'God bless "LIGHT" and the writers of it.'—Yours, &c.,

A. A. B.

Out of the Body Experiences?

SIR,—Having read in 'LIGHT' of February 22nd (page 89), the incident narrated by Dr. Theobald, in which, as he supposed, he left the room to retire for the night, and returning, saw his body still extended on the chairs on which he had been resting, it seems to me that it is, perhaps, a duty we owe to one another not to withhold any personal experiences which may add to the accumulating evidence of supernatural powers lying, for the most part hidden, in us all.

The first time that I can clearly remember leaving my body was when I was about seven or eight years old, though that was by no means the first time it had happened. I then saw my body at a little distance, and amused myself, as I often did afterwards, by making it walk up and down the nursery while I looked on, wondering vaguely why I could move it when I was away from it, myself being conscious all the time of my body's sensations.

I soon found that I could bring on this entertaining state by a very simple process. I had only to go into an empty room and say something aloud; it did not matter what. The sound of my own voice when alone caused a quite indescribable sensation to creep over me; I was no longer in my body though I could still control it. As I grew older I recognised more clearly the uncanny feeling that accompanied this experience. I became rather afraid of it and avoided it as much as possible.

My mother, who was musical and very particular about 'time,' would sometimes call to me while I was practising the piano in another room, 'Count! You must count loudly, so that I can hear you.' While I felt the temporary companionship I duly counted aloud, but very soon I ceased. Otherwise I found myself, as usual, a little way off while I could not only see but feel my bodily fingers touching the keys of the piano. Though I was of course reproved for disobedience, I never made the slightest attempt to explain why I would not count aloud. I remember my mother remarking that I was not so cheerful as the other children—I did not sing about the house as they did; and though I had not then heard of the loneliness of crowds, I never sang in church either; for the same reason that I would not count.

Possibly in consequence of discouragement this experience grew less vivid as years passed.

The biographers of Tennyson tell how he used to 'get out of the body' by going into a wood near his house, and there repeating his own name over and over until it lost all meaning. It would be interesting to know whether he said the name aloud. If so it may have been, as in my own experience, that the sound of the voice worked the miracle rather than the repetition of the word.

In her scholarly work on 'Mysticism,' page 69, Miss Evelyn Underhill tells how the Indian mystics employ the repetition of the *mantra*, or sacred word, to induce self-hypnotisation, as a step to the attainment of the mystic vision. One wonders again whether they say it aloud or not; though that divine revelation, the mystic vision (which science is just condescending to notice for the first time as 'cosmic consciousness') may, of course, spontaneously descend from the heights of the supraliminal, or arise from the depths of the subconscious, whichever it may be, without any hypnotisation or splitting up of the normal consciousness. But that is another subject.—Yours, &c.,

S. M. B.

Reincarnation.

SIR,—Mr. James Merlini takes exception to my objections to human reincarnation. He says (page 167) that my arguments are 'frivolous and perfunctory,' but he does not answer them. I am fully aware of the fact, as I suppose, everyone with ordinary intelligence is, that there is no effect without cause, but I fail to see what this has to do with human reincarnation. If what we sow in this life we reap in the next, where is the necessity for other earth lives?

I infer from Mr. Merlini's letter that he looks upon suffering as the result of wrong done in a previous earth life. If this is so, I would ask what wrong a rabbit can have done in a previous incarnation that it should suffer the tortures of vivisection, or a great soul like Jesus the agonies of crucifixion? The justice of suffering for acts done in a previous life, of which we have no recollection whatever, is about on a par with the justice of chastising a dog for stealing six months after the act, when he has forgotten all about it. Mr. Merlini also states that 'it is the spirit that, in evolving itself, changes the external form from one expression to a higher one.' This is so. When it sheds its earthly vesture, it clothes itself with a more spiritual one, ever expressing itself in a less gross form as it ascends to higher spheres. I agree with James Kerruish (p. 168) that 'there is nothing in (human) reincarnation that a true Spiritualist can accept.'—Yours, &c.,

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR.

Reincarnation and its Opponents.

SIR,—Miss E. Katharine Bates is an able and well-known writer on occult subjects; so that it is with a sense of deprivation one sees that she is unable to offer us any illumination on this disputed question. She approaches the question, as she explains, without bias, but there is (may I say?) a suspicion of the *parti pris* in the attitude implicit in her remarks: that the opponents of the doctrine are prejudiced persons. Without reopening the discussion on the main issue, might I suggest that it is not at all necessary to assume that those who deny the idea of physical re-embodiment desire to prejudge the question, or are lacking in common-sense? The present writer, for instance, has given the subject very long and careful study, and is certainly not alone in that respect. We who oppose the doctrine—and thereby admit a bias—would be ill-advised to suggest that the supporters of the idea are prejudiced persons. And we should be still more ill-advised if we imputed prejudice to reincarnationists, at the same time proclaiming (like the gifted authoress of 'Do the Dead Depart?') that we had 'no bias in favour of reincarnation being either true or false.'—Yours, &c.,

EUGENE PHILIP GLEN.

SIR,—The discussion of this subject never seems to take us any further, and for a good reason, as we are endeavouring to deal with ultimates on the mental plane and are consequently pulled up by enigma. It is only one degree less futile than twins in the womb debating together the problem of existence. The unborn child is conditioned by its environment and receives vague intimations of its mother's thought and emotion. We are in a relative position with a wider environment and receiving intimations from the spiritual society to which we belong through our guardian angels, but are we to assume that our mental concepts are relatively nearer ultimate reality than the intimations of the unborn child would be to the actual life of this world?

When we are consciously filled with the all-encompassing Love what does it matter whether we reincarnate or not? Such theories then assume their rightful place as a garment of thought—helpful indeed, and necessary for the time being, as all mental concepts are, to our unfoldment, but in no case to be given the rank of ultimate principles; otherwise we arrest development by reimposing dogmatic tyranny, which the mind is so curiously prone to do.

Mr. Merlini, in his interesting letter (p. 167), seems to imply that the doctrine of reincarnation solves the problem of evil as evidenced in the inequalities of life, while in reality he only pushes it further back, for 'in the beginning' out of infinite Goodness only goodness could come, whether in the soul or its environment; hence all souls should progress alike without sin or set-back. He also assumes that a wealthy family is enjoying the best condition in this world, which from the highest standpoint is not the case, the finest spiritual characters being much more often developed in want and adversity.

Moreover, variety and inequality of endowment and circumstance are essential to progress. Nor does a firm belief in the theory of evolution necessitate acceptance of the doctrine under consideration. In the development of the fetus man *does* 'go through the intervening degrees,' and as the higher is involved in the lower, the noblest spirit is involved in the parents as physical beings. Has not Mr. Merlini digested A. J. Davis's teaching on this point?—Yours, &c.,

GEO. SANDERS.

SIR,—Mr. R. A. Bush's article on 'The Genesis of the Ego' (p. 171) is interesting, and worthy of consideration. One great objection to the theory of reincarnation (as a retrograde movement) is its apparent uselessness; for while there are numerous worlds awaiting enfranchised spirits, why, like Lot's wife, look back upon a doomed city, oblivious of the glorious one 'not made with hands—eternal in the heavens'? Was not the Christ perfected in one incarnation and sealed with the truth of the covenant, 'Behold I make all things new'? Draper says, 'God always materialises.' True; but He puts 'new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.'—Yours, &c.,

E. P. PRESTICE.

Sutton.

A CORRECTION.—We have received a letter from Mr. Joseph Webb drawing attention to the fact that, in the notice of the passing of Mrs. Webb, which appeared on page 178, it was erroneously stated that her mortal remains were interred 'beside those of her husband and family.' It should have read 'in the presence of her husband and family.' We much regret the blunder.

SOCIETY WORK ON SUNDAY, APRIL 13th, &c.

Prospective Notices, not exceeding twenty-four words, may be added to reports if accompanied by stamps to the value of sixpence.

MARYLEBONE SPIRITUALIST ASSOCIATION.—*Shearn's Restaurant, 231, Tottenham Court-road, W.*—Mrs. Cannock gave successful descriptions.—15, Mortimer-street, W.—On the 7th Mrs. Clara Irwin gave fully recognised clairvoyant descriptions. Mr. Leigh Hunt presided at both meetings. Sunday next, Mr. E. W. Wallis. (See advertisement on front page.)—D. N.

LONDON SPIRITUAL MISSION: 13B, Pembroke Place, Baywater, W.—Addresses by Mr. Horace Leaf. Morning subject, 'Mind and Body.' For next week's services see front page.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, HAMPTON WICK.—Mrs. M. H. Wallis held meetings morning and evening. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. A. Jamrach, address on 'The Spiritualist's View of the Resurrection,' and clairvoyant descriptions.—J. W. H.

STRATFORD.—WORKMAN'S HALL, 27, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—Miss V. Burton's address on 'The Higher Life' was much appreciated. Mrs. E. Bryceson presided. Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. J. L. Macbeth Bain, address.—W. H. S.

BATTERSEA PARK-ROAD.—HENLEY-STREET.—An interesting address by Mr. Gerald Scholey on 'The Spiritualist's Needs' Sunday next, Mrs. Annie Boddington, address and clairvoyance Thursday, phenomena only. Silver collection for society's funds.

BRIXTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—Mrs. Maunders gave an address. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., healing; 3 p.m., Lyceum; at 7, Mrs. Neville, address and psychometry. Circles: Monday, 7.30, ladies'; Tuesday, 8.15, members'; Thursday, 8, public.

CLAPHAM.—HOWARD-STREET, NEW-ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Clempson addressed a large audience on 'The Immortality of the Soul.' Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., open circle; at 7 p.m., Mrs. Mary Gordon, address and clairvoyance. Mondays, at 3 p.m., ladies' circle. Thursday, at 8 p.m., public meeting.—F. C.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—Mrs. Clarke gave good addresses in her usual convincing manner. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mr. J. J. Morse, trance addresses; Tuesday, at 3, Mrs. Clarke, private interviews; at 8, also Wednesday, at 3 p.m., circles.—H. J. E.

BRIGHTON.—HOVE OLD TOWN HALL, 1, BRUNSWICK-STREET, WEST.—Mrs. Jennie Walker gave excellent addresses. Sunday next, at 11.15 and 7, Mrs. Mary Davies; Tuesdays, at 3 and 8, also Wednesdays, at 3, Mrs. G. C. Curry, clairvoyante; Thursdays, at 8.15, public circle.—A. C.

HOLLOWAY.—GROVEDALE HALL, GROVEDALE-ROAD.—Mrs. Mary Davies answered questions in the morning, spoke in the evening on 'The Occult Side of Prayer' and gave convincing clairvoyant descriptions; 9th, Mrs. Clara Irwin gave psychometrical readings. For Sunday next, see advt.—J. F.

CAMBERWELL NEW-ROAD.—SURREY MASONIC HALL.—Morning, 'Spirit Teachings'; evening, address on 'Spiritual Science and Religion.' Sunday next, Mr. W. E. Long: at 11 a.m., questions and personal messages; at 6.30, address on 'The Revelation of Christ.'

READING.—NEW HALL, BLAGRAVE-STREET.—Mr. P. R. Street gave addresses on 'Spirit Teaching' and 'Joan of Arc,' followed by descriptions by Mrs. C. Street. 7th, Mr. Street spoke on 'Magic, Black and White.' Sunday next, at 11.15 and 6.45, Mrs. M. H. Wallis.—M. L.

SEVEN KINGS.—45, THE PROMENADE.—Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Jones gave addresses, and Mrs. Jones clairvoyant descriptions. 8th, Mrs. Neville, address and psychometric delineations. Sunday next, 11.15 a.m., Mr. Hutchfield; 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush. Tuesday, 8 p.m., address. 27th, Mr. and Mrs. Smith. 29th, Mrs. Mary Davies.—C. E. S.

BRISTOL.—144, GROSVENOR-ROAD.—Mrs. J. S. Baxter ably dealt with 'One Shepherd' and 'Soul and Spirit,' and helpfully answered questions. Mr. Brunt's discourse on 'Our First Consciousness' was much appreciated. Sunday next, at 6.30, Mrs. Baxter and Mr. Brunt. Monday, at 7, healing; at 8, address. Wednesday, service at 8. Friday, at 7.30, circle.

HACKNEY.—240A, AMHURST-ROAD, N.—Mrs. Mary Gordon gave an excellent address on 'The Power of Thought' and recognised descriptions and messages. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., Mr. F. A. Hawes; at 7 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush. Monday, at 8, circle (inquirers welcomed). Thursday, at 7.30, Mr. H. Bell, healing; at 8.15 p.m., circle (members only).

PECKHAM.—LAUSANNE HALL, LAUSANNE-ROAD.—Morning, paper by Mr. Scott; evening, Mr. Macbeth Bain addressed a large audience, and Mrs. Keightley gave good descriptions. Sunday next—morning, circle; afternoon, Lyceum. Thursday, 24th, Fancy-Dress Social Meeting, admission 6d.; prizes offered. May Day, second performance, 'Her Majesty of May,' by special request.—At the Arlington, Sunday next—evening, Mr. D. J. Davis and Mrs. Podmore (clairvoyance). 27th, Mr. H. J. Stockwell.—A. C. S.

STRATFORD.—IDMISTON-ROAD, FOREST-LANE.—Morning, Mr. A. T. Connor spoke on 'Spiritualism and the Bible.' Evening, good address by Mr. A. J. McLellan on 'Judge not that ye be not judged,' followed by descriptions. 10th, Mrs. Keightley, address and descriptions. Sunday next, at 11.45 a.m., Mr. C. W. Lock; at 7 p.m., Mr. E. Burton. 24th, at 8 p.m., Mrs. E. Neville. 27th, Mr. A. J. Neville.—T. H.

CROYDON.—ELMWOOD HALL, ELMWOOD-ROAD, BROAD-GREEN.—Morning service conducted by Mr. J. W. Wilson; evening, visit from the Union of London Spiritualists, represented by Messrs. G. Tayler Gwinn, Dawson, and T. Alcock Rush. Mr. and Mrs. Alcock Rush kindly rendered a duet, and Miss Johnson a solo. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mr. G. B. Bunn; at 7, Mrs. E. A. Cannock, address and clairvoyance.—G.

SOUTHAMPTON.—CAVENDISH-GROVE.—Mr. W. E. Lloyd gave interesting addresses both morning and evening.—G. M.

NOTTINGHAM.—MECHANICS' LECTURE HALL.—Mr. T. Tyrrell gave clairvoyant descriptions morning and evening.

CHATHAM.—553, CANTERBURY-STREET, GILLINGHAM.—Mrs. Annie Boddington gave an address and descriptions.—E. C. S.

BRISTOL.—THOMAS-STREET HALL, STOKES CROFT.—Address and descriptions by Mrs. Powell-Williams. 11th, Mr. Edwards' healing circle. Usual week-night services.—W. G.

EXETER.—MARLBOROUGH HALL.—Morning address by Mr. Elvin Frankish; evening by Rev. Todd Ferrier; descriptions by Mrs. Letheren.—E. F.

BIRMINGHAM.—CAMDEN-STREET SCHOOLS.—Mr. Eryn gave addresses at Mission Room and Camden-street. Evening subject, 'Judgment and Mercy.'—J. R. C.

SOUTHEND.—CROWSTONE GYMNASIUM, NORTHVIEW DRIVE, WESTCLIFF-ON-SEA.—The president spoke on 'Communion and the Power of Thought,' and gave fully-recognised descriptions.

PLYMOUTH.—ODDFELLOWS' HALL, MORLEY-STREET.—Mrs. Trueman gave an address and descriptions. 9th, Mrs. Trueman and Mrs. Summers gave descriptions.—E. F.

WHITLEY BAY.—137, WHITLEY-ROAD.—Mrs. E. H. Cansick addressed an appreciative audience on 'Our Definition of Spiritual Spiritualism.'—C. C.

BOURNEMOUTH.—ASSEMBLY ROOMS, TOWN HALL AVENUE.—Addresses and descriptions by Mr. F. T. Blake. Also on the 10th inst.

PORTSMOUTH.—MIZPAH HALL, WATERLOO-STREET.—Addresses and descriptions by Mrs. G. C. Curry. 9th, address by Mrs. Rex Luckier and descriptions.—P.

SOUTHSEA.—LESSER VICTORIA HALL.—Mr. G. R. Symons gave addresses on 'The Light of the World' and 'Christianity and Spiritualism.'—J. W. M.

MANOR PARK.—THIRD AVENUE, CHURCH-ROAD.—Afternoon, healing service; evening, address and descriptions by Mrs. Jamrach. 9th, Mrs. Webster, address and descriptions.

BRISTOL.—16, KING'S SQUARE (OFF STOKES CROFT).—Mr. B. Short spoke on 'Ye are the Temple of God.' Descriptions by Mr. Thorne. Usual week-night meetings.—A. L.

WOOLWICH AND PLUMSTEAD.—PERSEVERANCE HALL, VILLAS-ROAD.—Morning, circle; evening, address by Mr. Huxley on 'The Spirit of Freedom.' 9th, Mr. Dodson gave an address.

KENTISH TOWN.—17, PRINCE OF WALES-CRESCENT, N.W.—Address and descriptions by Mrs. Fielder. On the 11th Mrs. E. Cornish gave descriptions.—J. A. P.

PORTSMOUTH TEMPLE.—VICTORIA-ROAD SOUTH.—Mr. Arthur Lamsley spoke on 'Love and Life,' and 'Spiritualism and Social Reconstruction.' 9th, Mrs. Spiller gave an address and psychic readings.—J. McF.

MANOR PARK.—CORNER OF SHREWSBURY AND STONE-ROAD.—Morning, healing by Mr. G. F. Tilby. Evening, Mrs. Podmore spoke on 'Spiritual Gifts' and gave descriptions. 10th, Mrs. Webster, address and descriptions.—A. L. N.

SOUTHEND.—SEANCE HALL, BROADWAY.—Mr. Hawes gave instructive addresses at both services. Morning, Mrs. Hawes gave spirit messages, and at night Mr. Rundle descriptions. Healing concentration on behalf of two well-known co-workers.

STONEHOUSE, PLYMOUTH.—UNITY HALL, EDGUMBE-STREET.—Address by Mr. Clavis on 'The Way of Sin'; soloist, Miss Hoppins; anthem by the choir; descriptions by Mrs. Joachim-Dennis. 9th, a successful sale of work and concert.—E. D.

SOUTHPORT.—HAWKSHED HALL.—Mr. C. Smithies' subject was, 'Will Modern Thought Solve Life's Problems?' 10th, Dr. Thomas Worthington spoke on 'How to Live One Hundred Years.'

EXETER.—MARKET HALL.—Morning, address and descriptions by Mrs. Vincent. Evening, address by Mr. C. V. Tarr. 8th, Mr. F. T. Blake addressed a large meeting at the Queen's Hall on 'Where are our Dead? Can they Communicate with Us?' and answered questions.—H. L.

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